Mr. Haynes Johnson
Washington Post
1150 15 St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20071

7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Md. 21702
4/21/91

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Thanks for the truly fine and important service you have rendered us all in your fine "Sleepwalking Through History."

It is a superb account of "America In The Reagan Years" and it will help explain and understand America after the Reagan Years.

At one point, however, you were conned - and not you alone by any means - by one of that administration's many tricks. It is on page 439:

"In the mideast the head of the Palestine Liberation Organization for the first time unequivocally stated the PLO's acceptance of Israel's right to exist and renounced terrorist acts."

If you consult Arafat's actual words rather than the interpretation of them by the administration you'll find that he made no reference at all to the State of Israel.

He could not have been more purposeful in this avoidance. First of all, he had no such authority and the national council had just refused to either change the charter or utter those words. Second of all, he said he recognized the right of the "people" of Israel to live in peace. He knew he'd not survive recognizing the state of Israel.

The difference is vast. He and the charter visualize the "people" of Israel as living in a Palestinian state - to - be.

What was unequivocal in that statement was his renunciation of terrorism. Then his own gang got caught in it and he refused to condemn his own group's terrorism.

History will record, I believe, that you have made an invaluable contribution to it and to understanding of those years.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg

Harold Weisberg